

## Implementation of Forest Plans

- Forest Resource (District) Management Plans Approved
  - Central Berkshires (January 2007)
  - \*Southern Berkshires (November 2008)
  - \*Northern Berkshires (November 2008)
  - \*Western CT Valley (November 2008)
- **\*Plans have not been implemented (no harvesting projects) since approval**
- The following is current policy for project implementation (also found at:  
<http://www.mass.gov/dcr/stewardship/forestry/docs/Final%20Public%20Notification%20Policy.pdf>)

# Implementation of Forest Plans

- **Public Notice of Proposed Timber Harvesting Summaries:**
  - Management Foresters will prepare proposed Timber Harvesting Summaries after consultation, coordination and approval from the responsible Regional Director or their designee, Park Supervisors and State Lands Management Program Supervisor.
  - The proposed Timber Harvesting Summaries will include: the municipality where the project is located; facility name; project's Forest Management district; Management Forester contact information (telephone number, e-mail address, and mailing address); project name; project location description; forest stand description; proposed preliminary silvicultural treatment; aesthetic, recreation, and environmental conditions and considerations such as forest reserves, high conservation value forest; and designated scenic by-ways; topographic map of the area with the area of the proposed work marked, and any other basic identifying information that the Bureau finds appropriate.
  - The proposed Timber Harvesting Summaries will be completed by June 30th and December 30th yearly. Interim proposed timber harvesting summaries plans may be completed at any time on an emergency basis. Examples of emergency situations are high mortality due to forest insects and diseases, blowdown, fire, snow and ice damage, rare species habitat needs, and treatment of invasive species infestation.

# Implementation of Forest Plans

## Public Notice of Proposed Timber Harvesting Summaries (cont):

- Proposed Timber Harvesting Summaries will be made publicly available by posting on the Bureau of Forestry's web page: <http://www.mass.gov/dcr/stewardship/forestry/manage/ProposedForestProductsSales.htm>) and in hard copy at the DCR Boston, Regional and Park Administrative Offices (site of proposed harvesting project).
- All proposed harvest project sites will be posted with a sign that informs the public of a proposed harvesting project and Management Forester contact information.
- Public meetings will be held on the third Thursday of January and July at each Regional Administrative Office (Amherst, Carlisle, Carver, Pittsfield and the Clinton Field Office). Management Foresters will be available from 3:00 pm until 5:00 pm and from 6:00 pm until 8:00 pm to present to the public and answer questions on the newly posted proposed Timber Harvesting Summaries.
- A table listing a summary of all projects under consideration will also be posted on the Bureau of Forestry web page including a link to each proposed Timber Harvesting Summary.

# Addressing of Public Comments

- During the proposed Timber Harvesting Summaries preparation process, Regional Directors or their designee, Park Supervisors, and Management Foresters will assess and identify projects of high public sensitivity involving natural resources and recreational activities and use such as forest reserves, high conservation value forests, intensively used areas and special and important public, geological or historic places. Potential high public sensitivity issues will be identified in the Timber Harvesting Summary.
- As part of the planning process, twice each year (on or about July 1 and January 1), the Department will post on its website the table listing all proposed harvesting projects, proposed harvesting summaries under consideration, and Management Forester contact information for the purpose of soliciting public comments.
- Public comments will be accepted for 45 days after the posting of the proposed Timber Harvesting Summaries.

# Addressing of Public Comments

- For all projects, after consideration of all public comments received, the Bureau of Forestry will:
  - Address public concerns through a prepared DCR written response, which will be coordinated and in consultation with qualified resource specialists, Regional Director or their designee, Park Supervisor, State Lands Management Program Supervisor and Chief of the Bureau of Forest Fire Control and Forestry and post the responses at the Timber Harvest Summary web page.
  - Projects that have high public sensitivity will have additional public involvement measures designed to address public concerns. The following are measures that may be useful to address concerns:
    - Development of fact sheets
    - Preparation of news releases
    - Public meetings
    - Field trips
    - Additional data collection
    - Consultation with qualified specialists

# Timber Harvesting Project Design

- **Silvicultural Prescription** - After public concerns have been addressed and completed, a detailed Silvicultural Prescription will be prepared according to the Massachusetts Forest Cutting Practices Act, Endangered Species Act, Wetlands Protection Act; Bureau of Forestry policy, direction, and guidelines; and applicable planning documents.
- The Management Forester will prepare a final comprehensive silvicultural prescription (additional attachment: Silviculture Narrative Model.pdf) that includes:
  - Current forest condition description
  - Short and long-term desired conditions
  - Silvicultural treatment
  - Rare and invasive species considerations
  - Wildlife considerations
  - Aquatic, riparian, and vernal pool considerations
  - Aesthetic and recreation considerations
  - Harvest considerations
  - Sale layout design
  - Forest marking instructions
- The Silvicultural Prescription will be made available for public review at the projects respective Regional or Field Office and upon request through public records requests through DCR legal staff at the DCR Boston Office.



# Forest Cutting Plan Preparation

- The Management Forester will prepare a Forest Cutting Plan according to Forest Cutting Practices Act regulations. Qualified specialists such as Archeologists, Hydrologists, Biologists, Ecologists, and staff from the Natural Heritage and Endangered Species Program will be consulted as needed.
- Cutting Plans as required will be submitted to the Bureau of Forestry, Service Forestry Program for approval.

The Forest Cutting Plan will be made available for public review at the project's respective Regional or Field Office, respective project locations city or town conservation commission and upon request through public records requests through DCR legal staff at the DCR Boston Office.

# Timber Sales

- Timber value is appraised
- Minimum acceptable bid established
- Advertised to Public
- Sale awarded to highest qualified bidder
  - Licensed harvester
  - Deposits and bonds are submitted
- Two year contracts - can be extended
  - Weather
  - Markets
- Contracts include services
  - Road improvement
  - Road maintenance
  - Trail maintenance
  - Gate installation
  - Wildlife habitat improvements (i.e.: old field mowing, orchard reclamation)
  - Invasive plant control
- Regular site visits conducted by Management Foresters for compliance of applicable laws and BMPs
  - Operating plans required of contractors – *New policy*
  - Inspection reports – *New policy*